



Security Council

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Twelfth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1667 (2006) of 31 March 2006, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2006 and requested me to present further recommendations for a drawdown plan for UNMIL. These recommendations were provided in my report of 9 June 2006 (S/2006/376). The present report provides an update on major developments in Liberia and contains broad benchmarks for the first phase of the consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of UNMIL.

II. Major political developments

2. I visited Liberia from 3 to 5 July to witness the progress being made in rebuilding the country and to consult with the Government on how best the United Nations could continue to support its efforts to consolidate peace and advance the recovery process. I met with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, members of her Cabinet and other senior public officials and had the privilege of addressing a joint session of the Liberian Legislature. I was impressed by the commitment and dedication to peace and democratic governance demonstrated by the leaders and people of Liberia and was reassured by the progress made in recent months notwithstanding the severe economic and financial limitations.

3. On 20 June, former Liberian President Charles Taylor was transferred from the Special Court for Sierra Leone to The Hague, Netherlands, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1688 (2006). Mr. Taylor's transfer elicited mixed reactions from the Liberian public. Most civil society and human rights organizations, as well as political figures supported the transfer as necessary to ensure stability in Liberia and the subregion. Others expressed concern that the victims of war crimes allegedly committed by Mr. Taylor would be denied the opportunity to witness the trial in the country where serious crimes were committed. However, the predominant view expressed was that Mr. Taylor should have a fair and transparent trial.

4. Despite some delays caused by tensions between the executive and legislative branches, the Government's first national budget for the fiscal period 2006/07 was unanimously passed by the Legislature on 22 August and signed into law by President Johnson-Sirleaf on 28 August. The budget, which is based on a base



revenue projection of \$120.9 million and a contingent revenue projection of \$9 million, focuses on the Government's national reconstruction and development priorities for Liberia. Revenues are expected to be generated from taxes on income, profits, property, domestic services, international trade and cellular phone companies, while contingent revenues will be dependent on income from sources such as timber, diamonds, iron ore and rubber.

5. In the aftermath of the fire on 26 July that destroyed part of the Executive Mansion, President Johnson-Sirleaf made changes within her Cabinet and in the leadership of the State security structures. The Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Chief of Staff was replaced and a new Director of the Special Security Services was appointed. The President indicated that these changes were aimed at strengthening the efficiency of the Executive Mansion staff with respect to security, administration and other responsibilities.

6. On 18 August, the Supreme Court rejected the writs of prohibition filed by some human rights and democracy organizations, as well as by two Senators, against the induction and seating of former leader of Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy and National Transitional Government of Liberia Minister of Justice, Kabineh Ja'neh, as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. This cleared the way for Mr. Ja'neh's induction on 29 August.

7. The President continued her anti-corruption campaign during the period under review. The President dismissed a number of senior government officials for corruption, including a deputy minister, an assistant minister, a chief medical officer, a deputy director of the Liberian National Police and a chairman of a public corporation. She also terminated the appointments of three revenue collectors, a senior economist and a supervisor of the foreign travel section for financial improprieties.

8. The long-awaited report on economic crime in Liberia, which was prepared by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) during the tenure of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, was publicly released by the Government in July. It may be recalled that ECOWAS did not release the report while the Transitional Government was still in office. The report had recommended the immediate dismissal of four senior officials in the Transitional Government for misappropriation and mismanagement of public funds. Several civil society groups and media outlets have since called for the prosecution of the individuals named in the report.

9. The President has reconstituted the task force on recovery of public assets. The previous membership had failed to recover government assets from former officials of the National Transitional Legislative Assembly of Liberia. These assets include vehicles, furniture and computers, which were allocated to them for use in their official capacity. In addition, the President has instructed the Ministry of Justice to conclude action on several audit reports of different government entities and to identify, for the purpose of prosecution, individuals who have abused the public trust. In the meantime, 12 former employees of the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation who were being prosecuted for misappropriating public funds, were acquitted by the Supreme Court on 23 August.

10. During the reporting period, the 17-member ad hoc presidential commission established to investigate the inter-ethnic dispute in Nimba County concluded

hearings in Sanniquellie and Saclepea after obtaining verbal assurances from the conflicting parties that they would peacefully settle future disputes. The commission is still conducting hearings in Ganta and has established a technical committee to investigate land and property claims in that city. In the meantime, UNMIL has continued to work closely with the Ministries of Internal Affairs, and Lands, Mines and Energy and with civil society organizations, to address other inter-ethnic, religious, community and land and property disputes in other parts of the country.

11. On 20 August, the Cabinet approved a draft anti-corruption policy paper prepared by the Governance Reform Commission, which sets out a framework to tackle impunity and promote a sustainable system of accountability and public integrity. The Governance Reform Commission also submitted a draft code of conduct and draft declaration of income, assets and liabilities form for public servants, which are both designed to ensure transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of public servants in the performance of their duties. In the meantime, the Government has submitted, for adoption by the Legislature, acts to ratify the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption.

III. Security situation

12. The security situation in Liberia has remained generally stable, but there are continuing serious threats to stability that require careful and robust management. Although the transfer of Mr. Taylor's trial from the region has considerably reduced tensions in Liberia, concern remains over the activities of his associates and supporters.

13. During the reporting period, UNMIL conducted military operations aimed at reassuring the populace and underlining the Mission's resolve to maintain peace and stability throughout the country. The operations involved robust patrolling within the Mission's area of operations and the deployment of the Mission's quick reaction force to the border areas and to Freetown to reinforce security at the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

14. Demobilized personnel from the former Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberian National Police and the Special Security Service staged several demonstrations to demand severance payments and other benefits. Some of these demands were met when retired Armed Forces of Liberia personnel were honoured at a ceremony attended by the President during the Independence Day celebrations and when former personnel of the Anti-Terrorist Unit (a militia group established and controlled by former President Charles Taylor) received payments from the Government, albeit on humanitarian grounds. Many of these demobilized personnel have limited access to employment opportunities and are susceptible to manipulation by various interest groups.

15. Incidents of armed robbery within Monrovia and its environs also increased during the reporting period, leading to calls by the public for the arming of the Liberian National Police and the adoption of more extensive security measures to curb the activities of criminal gangs. UNMIL police, in cooperation with the Liberian National Police, increased their patrols in high crime areas within Monrovia and continued to develop community-based approaches to crime prevention. In addition, on 16 August, UNMIL troops and formed police units

commenced joint night foot patrols throughout Monrovia. UNMIL has also continued to conduct joint cordon and search operations to recover firearms. These operations will actively continue in the weeks and months ahead.

16. Several incidents of armed robberies and killings involving management, workers, residents and ex-combatants were reported at the Cocopa and Guthrie rubber plantations. On 15 August, with the assistance of UNMIL, the Government officially re-established its control over the Guthrie rubber plantation. UNMIL has also increased its patrolling activities at Cocopa and other rubber plantations. In the meantime, efforts are being made to accelerate the establishment of interim management teams at contested or abandoned rubber plantations, as recommended by the joint Government/UNMIL task force on rubber plantations.

17. There were also shooting incidents within Monrovia involving officials of the Special Security Service, which provides close protection to the President. On 3 and 5 August, separate shooting incidents occurred at the residence of the Director of the Special Security Service. The latter incident resulted in the death of the Director's personal bodyguard from gunshot wounds allegedly inflicted by a second security officer. The investigations into the causes of these incidents and of a third shooting incident on 8 August at the residence of the Deputy Director of the Special Security Service are ongoing.

18. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, on 26 July, during Liberia's 159th Independence Day celebration, a fire broke out in the Executive Mansion where President Johnson-Sirleaf was hosting a luncheon for some 300 people, including the Presidents of Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. Although no injuries were reported, significant damage was done to the Executive Mansion. An investigation into the fire was conducted with the assistance of UNMIL and South African forensic experts. On 3 September, the Government released the investigation report, which attributed the cause of the fire to an electrical fault.

19. No significant military activity that could threaten the stability of Liberia was observed on Liberia's borders with Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire or Guinea. However, the unstable situation in Côte d'Ivoire continues to present a serious potential threat to stability in Liberia. In particular, there are concerns about the possible movement of armed groups from Côte d'Ivoire into Liberia; the recruitment of former Liberian combatants, including children, by Ivorian militia groups and Liberians to fight in Côte d'Ivoire; and an influx of Ivorians seeking refuge in Liberia in the event of violence in that country. To counter these potential threats, UNMIL has positioned additional forces in the eastern and southern border areas and strengthened its aviation capability in the southern part of the country.

20. In order to increase the presence of the United Nations in the border areas, establish cross-border liaison and reassure the local population, UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) conducted concurrent patrols along the Liberian-Ivorian border from 26 to 30 June in "Operation Mayo". Similar patrols were undertaken from 7 to 11 August with the Sierra Leonean forces in "Operation Loko".

IV. Status of implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

A. Rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants

21. As at 15 August, some 39,000 ex-combatants had not yet benefited from the reintegration programme. It is expected that 19,409 of these ex-combatants will be absorbed by projects sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Trust Fund, while the remaining caseload will be covered by bilaterally funded programmes.

22. In the meantime, UNMIL continued to collect and destroy residual weapons and ammunition that were voluntarily surrendered or discovered through search operations. Since the end of the disarmament and demobilization programme in 2005, 632 weapons, 70,454 rounds of small arms ammunition, 941 pieces of unexploded ordnance and 11,550 assorted spares have been collected and destroyed by UNMIL.

23. A coordination group comprising representatives from UNMIL, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNDP, the Liberian National Police and the Liberian National Commission for Small Arms and Landmine Action (an international non-governmental organization) has been established to streamline efforts to eliminate small arms and light weapons from Liberia. The coordination group has prepared a common strategy, which includes modalities for the collection and disposal of unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war, and mine risk education. The group's work is complemented by the UNDP Community Arms Collection for Development programme. Since its launch in January, over 7,000 small arms ammunitions, 100 guns and 100 unexploded ordnances and rocket-propelled grenades have been collected through the Community Arms Collection for Development programme. As at August, the programme was being implemented in Lofa, River Gee, Maryland, Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Bong Counties.

B. Reform of the Liberian National Police

24. The reform and restructuring of the Liberian National Police continues to make good progress. As at 1 September, 2,073 Liberian National Police, 392 Special Security Services and 155 Seaport Police officers had been trained and deployed. Some 295 new Liberian National Police recruits are currently undergoing field training, while 419 are receiving basic training. In order to reach the target of 3,500 fully trained Liberian National Police personnel by July 2007, the field training programme has been compressed from 26 to 16 weeks. Moreover, to address the serious shortfall in the mid-level ranks of the Liberian National Police, the United Nations police has developed a basic management course for 300 Liberian National Police officers and a senior leadership qualification programme for 50 officers.

25. At the same time, the presence of the Liberian National Police in the interior of the country remains far below acceptable levels. This is partially due to the unavailability of suitable housing, vehicles and communications equipment needed to sustain the deployment of the police in the counties. To date, the Liberian National Police has deployed only 454 officers throughout the 15 counties in Liberia. Immediate priority has been given to providing reinforcements for the

Liberian National Police county headquarters and the Guthrie rubber plantation. Of the remaining 1,577 trained police officers, 208 are assigned to zones and depots within Monrovia, 49 are assigned to Roberts International Airport, 300 are assigned to the Liberian National Police Support Unit, 174 are assigned to the Monrovia Central Patrol Division, and the remaining 731 are assigned to the Liberian National Police headquarters in Monrovia. The United Nations police is working with the Liberian National Police to rationalize the high number of officers currently assigned to the Monrovia headquarters.

26. The Government urgently needs funds to complete the basic training programme for new recruits, to conduct specialized management and thematic police training programmes and to provide vehicles, communications equipment and accommodation allowances to sustain the deployment of the Liberian National Police in the interior of the country. UNMIL is assisting the Government to prepare an appeal to Member States for assistance in these critical areas. I urge Member States to respond favourably to this request.

27. As at 1 September, 2,035 out of a targeted 2,351 Liberian National Police officers had been deactivated with funds provided by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Those remaining to be deactivated include officers who have either disputed their deactivation or who cannot be located.

C. Reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia

28. The United States of America continues to assist the Government in building a new Armed Forces of Liberia. To date, 7,050 recruits have applied to be enlisted in the Armed Forces of Liberia, of whom 6,327 have passed the literacy tests, 2,510 have passed the physical fitness test and 1,050 have passed all medical tests. However, as at 1 September, only 563 applicants had been recommended for training. The first group of 110 recruits for the new army began training at the Barclay Training Centre in Monrovia on 22 July. However, the first fully trained battalion is expected to be operational only in 2008.

29. The Government is also in the process of formulating a national security policy and has tasked the Governance Reform Commission with leading the public dialogue on security sector reform.

D. Consolidation of State authority throughout the country

30. Steady progress continued to be made in the restoration and consolidation of State authority throughout the territory of Liberia, with UNMIL facilitating the return of government officials to their duty stations in the counties. However, the work of county officials and government line ministries in the interior of the country continues to be constrained by the lack of communications equipment, transportation and office and residential accommodations. In the meantime, special support teams jointly established by UNMIL and the United Nations country team to assist county superintendents in strengthening coordination and to develop community recovery and development priorities have become operational in the counties.

31. Three additional Central Bank payment centres, constructed with the assistance of the Mission's quick-impact projects, were opened in Kakata, Margibi County, Gbarnga, Bong County and Buchanan, Grand Bassa County to facilitate salary payment to government officials stationed in remote locations. The number of Central Bank payment centres in the counties is now six. The Central Bank has carried out assessments in Barclayville, Grand Kru County, Harper, Maryland County and Greenville, Sinoe County with a view to opening payment centres in those locations, and is also encouraging commercial banks to expand their operations outside Monrovia.

32. Another important step in the restoration of State authority was the election of a new nine-member National Traditional Council of Paramount Chiefs and Elders. In addition, initial steps have been taken by the National Elections Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to prepare for municipal and chieftaincy elections, which are scheduled for October 2007, in which city mayors, paramount chiefs, clan chiefs and town chiefs are to be elected.

E. Restoration of proper management of natural resources

33. The Government is making progress in its efforts to regain control over the country's natural resources. In compliance with Security Council resolution 1689 (2006), a national forestry reform law, which was drafted with the assistance of UNMIL, is in the process of being enacted. Moreover, the Government's policy on the movement of timber within the country is being strictly implemented at the joint UNMIL/Forestry Development Authority checkpoints in Monrovia, which has led to an increase in public revenues. Efforts are being made to extend this arrangement to other parts of the country. The Government is also in the process of developing an environmentally sustainable pit-sawing policy with the assistance of UNMIL.

34. The President has extended the mandate of the joint Government/UNMIL task force established to undertake a comprehensive assessment of Liberia's rubber plantations. The task force is now mandated to oversee the implementation of the recommendations contained in its 23 May report to the President, including the repossession of illegally occupied plantations, review of concession and management agreements and establishment of interim management teams for contested or abandoned plantations.

35. UNMIL is assisting with the installation of the interim management teams. The Mission has constructed a campsite and structure on the Guthrie rubber plantation, which will house the Liberian National Police, the Magistrate Court and other relevant government agencies. In addition, Liberian National Police personnel have been deployed to the plantation to conduct night and day patrols with the support of the United Nations police, and an interim management team has been created to manage the plantation pending the establishment of a permanent management team in accordance with the Public Procurement and Concessions Act.

36. The Government has accepted the recommendations of the Kimberley Process assessment team that visited Liberia in May, including the need to establish an inter-ministerial task force and a steering committee on Kimberley Process compliance and to suspend all large-scale mining activities. The United States of America is assisting with the construction of the Liberia Diamond Authority building, which will house the Government's Kimberley Process Certification Scheme diamond

appraisers and administrators. In the meantime, UNMIL has temporarily provided containers that are being used as diamond certification offices. In June, with the support of UNMIL and UNDP, the Government hosted a West Africa subregional conference on the harmonization of taxation, border controls, law enforcement and issues related to alluvial diamond mining. The conference decided that civil society organizations should participate in the future establishment of diamond mining policies and artisanal alluvial miners should be provided with funding and training assistance.

37. Despite these efforts, illegal artisanal mining continues to be reported, mainly in the western parts of the country and in Nimba and Sinoe counties. In that regard, UNMIL will continue to assist the Government, to the extent possible, with its surveillance, mapping and inspection activities.

F. Promotion of human rights and the rule of law

1. Promotion of human rights

38. During the reporting period, UNMIL continued to carry out human rights promotion, protection and monitoring activities throughout the country. The Mission also intensified its capacity-building activities by conducting comprehensive legal education and training programmes for members of the legal profession and judicial system. A series of workshops was held for magistrates and justices of the peace from all 15 counties. In addition, with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Penal Reform International, a non-governmental organization, UNMIL conducted a three-day workshop on best practices, strengthening the rule of law and human rights protection for 120 participants drawn from the police, corrections, judiciary and local administration across the country. The aim of the workshop was to improve and strengthen the criminal justice system and justice delivery in the country. Despite these activities, there has been an increase in reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence, in particular, rape and sexual abuse of women and girls.

39. During the reporting period, UNMIL released its fourth report on the human rights situation in Liberia. The report, which covers the period from February to April 2006, highlights human rights violations by law enforcement and judicial personnel, the human rights situation on rubber plantations and issues related to the protection of child rights. It also reports on the impact of the interference of government officials in the judicial system, corruption, high rates of sexual and gender-based violence, particularly involving child victims, and the use of harmful traditional practices on the enjoyment of human rights. The report contains a number of recommendations aimed at helping the Government with the implementation of its international human rights obligations.

40. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission commenced operations following the nationwide launching of its programme of public activities on 22 June. However, the Commission is still beset by financial and logistical constraints. While the Commission has requested \$10 million for its two years of operations, it has only received \$150,000 out of \$600,000 pledged by UNDP; €84,000 out of €300,000 pledged by the European Commission; and \$180,000 out of \$278,000 promised by the Open Society Initiative for West Africa. In the meantime, the Government has earmarked \$300,000 in the 2005/06 budget and office space and vehicles for the

Commission's operations, UNMIL continued to support the Commission's public outreach programme and to make its air assets available for access to remote parts of the country.

41. The Independent National Commission on Human Rights is still in the process of appointing its members. On 10 August, the independent committee of experts, which was established to vet the nominees and applicants for the posts of Chairman and Commissioners, conducted interviews of 12 prospective candidates. Interviews for the remaining 13 candidates will be conducted shortly, after which the committee will conduct an assessment of all candidates on the basis of their human rights experience and prepare a shortlist to be examined by the Chief Justice. The final selections will be made by the President and confirmed by the Senate.

2. Support for the judicial system

42. Reform of the justice sector is continuing, albeit at a slow pace. The administration of justice continues to be constrained by the lack of court buildings in many counties and the dearth of qualified judicial and legal officers. UNMIL has funded a number of court construction and renovation projects across the country through its quick-impact project scheme. To date, six projects have been completed in Kakata, Tubmanburg, Gbarnga, Greenville, Bensonville and Careyburg and another seven projects are ongoing in Buchanan, Zwedru, Harper, Ganta, Sanniquellie, Bopolu and Cestos City.

43. UNMIL has also assisted the Government with the hiring of 12 national prosecutorial consultants and 11 public defence consultants for an initial period of six months. This has resulted in more cases being heard by the courts, which has contributed to a reduction in the backlog of pending cases; greater access to justice; improved adherence to fair trial standards; and increased public trust and confidence in the judicial system. Arrangements are under way to hire an additional seven public defence consultants.

44. The Mission's legal and judicial system support division continued to expand its capacity-building activities in the counties. The division is providing advice and assistance to legal and judicial officers in the counties in order to enhance their practical and procedural capacities to administer justice.

45. A task force constituted by the Minister of Justice to facilitate the establishment of the law reform commission commenced work in July. The draft law for the establishment of the commission is expected to be finalized and submitted to President Johnson-Sirleaf later this year. The success of this initiative will depend on the provision of adequate funding and support by the Government and the international community.

3. Support for the corrections system

46. UNMIL continued to assist the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation in improving the conditions of correctional facilities in the country. The refurbishment programme, which is being funded by the United States of America and Norway, is continuing. Work has been completed at Kakata prison, while the rehabilitation of the Monrovia, Gbarnga, Buchanan and Harper prisons and the Zwedru Palace of Corrections is at varying stages of completion. The Firestone Company has also commenced rehabilitation of the Bondiway prison, which had been closed due to its

dilapidated condition. Most correction facilities still rely heavily on UNMIL, the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Committee of the Red Cross and other partners for water, food, medical and other essential supplies to prisoners.

47. The Government has absorbed all the graduates of the first corrections officers' training class into the civil service. In the meantime, the recruits of the third corrections officers' training class have completed their 12-month induction training and the recruitment and training of qualified candidates for the fourth training class has been approved. The Government has also agreed to the deactivation of corrections personnel who do not meet civil service recruitment criteria.

G. Economic governance

48. Since my previous report, further progress was made in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. The concessions and contracts expert, who was recruited for the technical secretariat of the Contracts and Concessions Review Committee, assumed duties. In addition, the European Commission commenced the recruitment exercise for an auditor general who will head the General Auditing Commission. On 16 June, the Government signed a memorandum of understanding for the consolidation of operational bank accounts for State-owned enterprises.

49. The Economic Governance Steering Committee continued to meet regularly to monitor progress in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. The Steering Committee's technical team is working with the internationally recruited experts to ensure that they focus on improving financial management and transparency and on building the capacity of Government institutions and personnel through the proper transfer of skills and knowledge. The Steering Committee has asked the internationally recruited experts to provide monthly status reports on their activities. In the meantime, as part of the capacity-building process, the Government, in collaboration with UNDP, has convened a knowledge-building seminar to discuss how Liberia's State-owned enterprises can best utilize the international experts.

50. On 26 June, UNMIL, in collaboration with the Steering Committee technical team's public information subcommittee, launched an information campaign to raise public awareness of the progress being made in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. The campaign will include daily interviews with government officials, civil society and international partners on UNMIL Radio. A website on the implementation of the Programme has also been created. In addition, the World Bank has agreed to provide a grant for public communication and sensitization efforts related to the Programme.

51. The Government continued to undertake initiatives aimed at improving controls over the granting of contracts and concessions and implementing a basic procurement system through its Public Procurement and Concessions Committee. During the reporting period, the Committee, in collaboration with the European Commission, convened a meeting of the Contracts and Concessions Review Committee, which was established to undertake an independent review of all contracts and concessions entered into by the National Transitional Government of Liberia.

H. National recovery, reconstruction and development

52. A partners' meeting was held in Monrovia on 12 and 13 July to assess the Government's performance during its first six months in office and to agree on the way forward for Liberia's recovery, reconstruction and development. The meeting provided an opportunity for the Government to meet with its international partners to address several policy issues prior to the partners' forum scheduled for early next year in Washington, D.C. At the meeting, the Government highlighted the severe capacity and implementation constraints that it faces in achieving its reconstruction and development objectives and presented a compelling case for targeted budget support and early debt relief. International partners acknowledged the positive achievements already made by the Government and urged it to continue to adhere to its reform programmes so as to ensure compliance with the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and eventual debt relief.

53. During his visit to Liberia on 21 and 22 July, the President of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, pledged the Bank's commitment to the economic development of Liberia and agreed to provide assistance for labour-intensive public works schemes aimed at building key infrastructure and generating employment. The Secretary of State for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn, and the President of the African Development Bank, Donald Kaberuka, also paid a joint visit to Liberia on 18 and 19 July to review areas in which the United Kingdom and the African Development Bank could assist Liberia.

54. The Government has continued to highlight the urgent need for job creation. On 15 July, it launched the Liberia Emergency Employment Programme and the Liberia Employment Action Programme. The Liberia Emergency Employment Programme is aimed at creating short-term employment opportunities, while the Liberia Employment Action Programme is intended to provide long-term sustainable employment. Sources of short-term employment will include the labour-intensive rehabilitation of roads and critical infrastructures across the country. Over 5,000 local community members, including returnees and ex-combatants, have benefited from this initiative, which is supported by the WFP "Food support for local initiatives" programme. UNMIL's quick-impact projects have also enhanced the process of employment creation, with nine projects providing short-term employment to some 900 ex-combatants and local community members in the south-eastern part of Liberia. In addition, UNMIL has continued to assist in the distribution of donated tools, as well as seed rice and other agricultural commodities provided by China.

55. The Government and the World Bank signed an agreement for the first part of a \$68 million grant to conduct emergency rehabilitation and repair of critical infrastructure, including the rehabilitation of the Monrovia-Buchanan and Monrovia-Ganta highways, repairs to 65 bridges and construction of six bridges. The second part of the grant will be used to increase the Government's capacity to carry out road maintenance functions, build the capacity of the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation and construct ports, airports, schools and health clinics. The grant is aimed at creating short-term jobs and providing a basis for economic development.

56. UNMIL and Liberia's international partners continued to support the Government's efforts to implement its 150-day action plan, which was designed to address some of the most urgent needs of the population, such as the partial restoration of electricity, road repairs and the rehabilitation of Government infrastructure. The Government estimates that more than 60 per cent of the action plan was successfully completed on schedule. As part of the 159th independence anniversary celebration of Liberia and in fulfilment of the promise made at her inauguration ceremony, President Johnson-Sirleaf switched on the Monrovia emergency electricity supply on 26 July, which was made possible with assistance from Ghana, the United States of America and the European Commission.

57. A team from the International Monetary Fund visited Monrovia from 20 to 28 July to assess progress under the Fund's staff-monitored programme. The team was impressed with the considerable progress made in the implementation of key policies under the staff-monitored programme and with the fact that revenues exceeded the programme target.

V. Humanitarian activities

58. The humanitarian situation continued to improve during the reporting period. To date, 77,523 refugees have returned to their places of origin with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). In order to accelerate the return of the refugees, OHCHR has contracted a vessel to repatriate Liberian refugees residing in Ghana. The first group of 300 refugees from Ghana arrived in Liberia on 28 July. Although the camps for internally displaced persons have been officially closed since 20 April, some 13,000 internally displaced persons continue to reside in and around the camps.

59. There are several humanitarian challenges that require urgent attention in the communities of return. These include the provision of health care, water and sanitation, education, shelter, food and livelihood opportunities for returnees. The 2006 United Nations consolidated appeal for Liberia has only received 34 per cent of the estimated requirements for 2006, as per the mid-year review, which was launched on 19 July. I appeal to donors to generously provide the assistance required to meet these needs.

VI. Gender

60. The Mission's Gender Affairs Unit continued to build the Mission's capacity to implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) by conducting a training programme for middle and senior management in the Mission. The Unit also collaborated with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Ministry of Gender and Development to organize a sensitization workshop for 100 women on the challenges and lessons learned from their participation in the 2005 national elections. In addition, the Unit actively supported the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process by providing training to the newly appointed commissioners aimed at facilitating outreach to women and girls. It facilitated a one-week consultative visit to Liberia by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, during which Committee members met with President Johnson-Sirleaf, who assured them of her Government's political support

for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Unit also participated in training organized by UNDP and the World Bank for legislators and government agencies involved in the preparation of the budget.

VII. HIV/AIDS

61. The Mission's HIV/AIDS Unit continued to collaborate with the Mission's Integrated Training Cell to carry out HIV/AIDS awareness, training and sensitization as part of the induction training for military, police and civilian personnel. The Unit also continued to promote HIV/AIDS awareness through its participation in an UNMIL Radio live phone-in programme. In addition, it organized workshops for HIV/AIDS peer educators drawn from non-governmental organizations and UNMIL's military, police and civilian components. It also facilitated a training workshop organized by the Liberian Council of Churches for 28 church and youth leaders and, in collaboration with UNICEF, facilitated another workshop for 60 Montserrado video club owners.

VIII. Personnel conduct and discipline

62. The UNMIL Personnel Conduct and Discipline Team focused on developing strategies to prevent, identify, report and effectively respond to all categories of misconduct through training and awareness-raising. In addition to standardized training for all United Nations personnel, the Mission designed a training module for focal points for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in the Mission area, which is aimed at strengthening reporting mechanisms, responding effectively to reported allegations and providing support to victims of abuse.

63. Some 31 "Category 1" offences, including 24 cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, and 95 "Category 2" offences have been reported since January 2006. All cases are under investigation.

IX. Public information

64. The public information component of the Mission continues to support a number of priority programmes of the Mission, the United Nations agencies, the Government and civil society. The component organized several sporting activities to promote peace among communities. UNMIL Radio also increased its programming on the activities of the three branches of Government and introduced a new programme, in Liberian English, entitled "Talk with the President", which focuses on the activities of the Government. In addition, the radio station introduced three programmes in the Bassa, Lorma and Kpelle local languages. In the meantime, the Mission has established a new radio station studio at its headquarters in Monrovia to provide increased access to the radio.

65. The public information component conducted training for several community radio practitioners, newspapers publishers and Ministry of Information personnel. In addition, the component established a press club in one of the high schools in Gbarma, Gbarpolu County, to teach interested students basic journalism skills,

including how to create a school newsletter and basic reporting on the community radio station.

X. Adjustment of the Mission

A. Military component

66. As at 1 September, UNMIL troop strength stood at 14,827 out of an authorized strength of 15,125. In my previous report, I indicated that, given the relative stability that has prevailed since the inauguration of the new Government and based on the detailed assessment provided in my tenth progress report (S/2006/159), which remains valid, one infantry battalion would be withdrawn by the end of 2006. Accordingly, the Mission will repatriate one battalion, without replacement, in November 2006. As I have proposed in my previous reports, further adjustments, including the withdrawal of another infantry battalion in early 2007, will be considered if the security situation permits.

67. UNMIL continued to provide security to the Special Court for Sierra Leone in accordance with Security Council resolution 1626 (2005). In view of the high-profile nature of the detainees at the Special Court, security protection at the Court's premises remains a top priority. The 250-strong military unit from Mongolia charged with responsibility for guarding the Court's premises was rotated in July.

B. Police component

68. As at 1 September, the Mission's police strength stood at 1,056 officers, out of an authorized ceiling of 1,240 officers, which includes four United Nations police immigration officers, 605 officers in five formed police units and 18 corrections officers. The fifth formed police unit will be deployed to the Mission in September to support the efforts of the Liberian National Police in containing threats to public order in Monrovia and other urban centres, as well as on rubber plantations.

69. In order to support the efforts of the Liberian National Police to re-establish police primacy throughout the country, the United Nations police has increased its presence in five locations, including Bo Waterside, Foya, Pleebo, Toe Town and the Guthrie rubber plantation. Plans are under way to establish United Nations police team sites at Weebo, River Gee County and Kungbor forest, Gbarpolu County, where illegal mining activities have continued. In addition, an increased number of United Nations police have been assigned to the criminal investigation department and patrol section of the Liberian National Police headquarters in Monrovia and in the counties.

70. As training priorities for the Liberian National Police have shifted towards institutional capacity-building and operations support, efforts are now focused on deploying skilled United Nations police personnel to the Mission to fill specialized training positions. The strength of the United Nations police component will be reviewed as the reform and training programmes progress, and further recommendations will be provided in my future reports.

XI. Benchmarks

71. In my June report (S/2006/376), I indicated that UNMIL was developing benchmarks to guide the consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of UNMIL. In that regard, the benchmarks covering the consolidation phase are set out in annex I of the present report.

72. The benchmarks are divided into four categories, including security, governance and the rule of law; economic revitalization; and infrastructure and basic services. The security benchmarks, including the training and deployment of the Armed Forces of Liberia and Liberian National Police, development by the Government of a national security strategy and architecture, reintegration of ex-combatants and return and reintegration of refugees, are critical in determining the pace and timing of the drawdown and eventual withdrawal of the Mission. The Mission will continue to elaborate on these key benchmarks and further details will be provided in my subsequent reports. Although the benchmarks covered under governance and rule of law, economic revitalization and infrastructure and basic services are critical for the consolidation of peace and stability, these are primarily long-term tasks that are expected to be fully accomplished after the departure of UNMIL.

XII. Observations

73. Liberia has continued to make tangible progress in a number of areas. The three branches of Government are functioning; the reform and restructuring of the security sector is gradually progressing; the resettlement of internally displaced persons has been completed; an increasing number of Liberian refugees have returned home; the Government is taking active measures to fight corruption; and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission has begun its work.

74. Progress has also been made in implementing a number of important structural reforms. The Government has commenced the review of concessions, contracts and licences, and international financial experts have been deployed to most of the key revenue-generating agencies under the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme. Measures have also been taken to strengthen the management and operations of the Central Bank and to boost revenue collection and control government expenditure. The efforts of the Government to meet the goals set out in the 150-day action plan are yielding some results, such as the partial restoration of electricity and pipe-borne water to some parts of Monrovia.

75. The progress made in Liberia was warmly welcomed by the African heads of State and Government at the last summit of the African Union, held in Banjul in July 2006. Liberia, which was once at the centre of conflict in the subregion, now serves as an example of hope and of what can be achieved when leaders and citizens work together and are committed to peace.

76. Nevertheless, Liberia still faces enormous challenges in several areas. The country is heavily dependent on UNMIL for the provision of security, given that the new police service is still in its formative stages and the training of the new armed forces is only just beginning. The Government and UNMIL will need to remain vigilant to carefully manage the internal threats to stability, especially those emanating from spoilers who may be adversely affected by the Government's

reform processes. Close monitoring of Liberia's borders will also continue to be essential, in the light of the volatile situation in the subregion, particularly in Côte d'Ivoire. In addition, a number of other tasks that are critical to the sustainability of peace in the country have yet to be completed, including the reintegration of ex-combatants, the resettlement of internally displaced persons and returning refugees and the consolidation of State authority.

77. The large number of unemployed youth concentrated in urban centres is a serious source of concern, especially given that the increase in criminal activities in Monrovia and other city centres has been linked to their presence. Unless economic activity is rapidly revived and employment opportunities created in the near future, these unemployed youths and frustrated former combatants will continue to constitute a source of major instability. It is gratifying to note that the Government has recently launched a number of programmes aimed at providing employment opportunities. I encourage international partners to fully support these very important initiatives.

78. While the progress that has been made in restructuring the Liberian security sector is encouraging, the Government still needs to rapidly develop a national security policy and architecture, which will enable it to set out a coherent road map for assuming security responsibility for the country. Since the Mission's drawdown will be linked to this road map, the Government should work expeditiously towards finalizing this policy.

79. The transfer of former President Charles Taylor from the region to stand trial before the Special Court for Sierra Leone sitting in The Hague was an important development. Not only did it signal that the world will not accept impunity, it also demonstrated the recognition by the Government of Liberia, regional leaders and the Security Council that Mr. Taylor's continued presence in Freetown was a threat to peace and stability in the subregion. In this regard, I wish to express my deep appreciation to all the Member States who collaborated to make possible the holding of Mr. Taylor's trial in The Hague.

80. In the light of the security issues outlined above, and in view of the planning for the drawdown of UNMIL, I recommend the extension of the mandate of UNMIL for a period of one year, until 30 September 2007.

81. The Government has taken further steps to reform the judicial sector and enhance the rule of law. However, there are a number of major structural challenges that will require the generous assistance of the international community if they are to be effectively addressed. At the same time, support will be needed for the work of the Independent National Human Rights Commission and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It is important for donors to provide funding for these critical areas.

82. Efforts to consolidate peace in Liberia are already bearing fruit, including the cultivation of good relations with its neighbours. The attendance of the Presidents of Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone at the 159th Liberian Independence Day celebrations was a highly commendable gesture, which will have a positive impact on relations among the Mano River Union member States and Côte d'Ivoire. The leaders of these countries are encouraged to build on this development and continue to take measures that will enhance subregional dialogue and revitalize the Mano River Union.

83. In conclusion, I would like to commend the people and Government of Liberia, my Special Representative, Alan Doss, and all UNMIL military and civilian personnel for the progress accomplished during the reporting period. I would also like to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries, ECOWAS, the African Union, the International Contact Group on the Mano River Basin, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, humanitarian organizations, multilateral and bilateral donors and international and local non-governmental organizations for their important contributions and support to the peace consolidation process in Liberia.

Annex I

Benchmarks for phase I of the consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal of UNMIL**Consolidation phase — 2006-2007***Benchmark**Indicators of progress***Security**

Armed Forces of Liberia training and deployment

- Armed Forces of Liberia training commences
- Ministry of Defence fully staffed
- Armed Forces of Liberia concept of operations produced
- First Armed Forces of Liberia battalion operational

Liberian National Police training and deployment

- Deactivation of Liberian National Police personnel completed
- 3,500 Liberian National Police personnel recruited and trained
- Liberian National Police support unit trained and equipped
- All county police stations fully staffed and operational

National security strategy and architecture

- Complete national security review
- Produce and adopt national security strategy and commence implementation
- National Security Council and local structures in place and functioning

Reintegration of ex-combatants

- Remaining ex-combatants enrolled in reintegration programmes
- Small arms collection and control programme extended to all counties

Return and reintegration of refugees

- Organized refugee returns concluded

*Benchmark**Indicators of progress***Governance and rule of law**

Strengthen administration of justice

- Law Reform Commission established and comprehensive review of laws commenced
- Comprehensive review of court administrative procedures completed and being implemented
- All Circuit Court houses and magistrates courts constructed or renovated, equipped and staffed
- Legal aid clinics available in each county
- Reduction in pre-trial detention period

Strengthen human rights

- Independent National Commission on Human Rights functioning effectively
- National human rights action plan developed and being implemented
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission process ongoing in all counties

Conflict management

- County-level reconciliation and conflict management processes established to address longstanding grievances, including property and housing committees

National institutions

- Local authorities at county level established
- County superintendents' offices established and equipped

Anti-corruption

- Anti-corruption strategy approved and implemented

Civil service reform

- Implementation of civil service code of conduct

Corrections reform

- National policy framework for Corrections Bureau formulated and approved
- Corrections staff trained and deployed
- Revised penal legislation adopted and any necessary changes implemented
- Correction facilities in each county fully operational

*Benchmark**Indicators of progress***Economic revitalization****Implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme^a**

- Establishment of financial management and budgeting procedures in line with International Monetary Fund (IMF) recommendations (staff-monitored programme)
- Government revenue increased in line with IMF projections
- Transparent procedures for granting of concessions implemented as recommended by Economic Governance Steering Committee

Revival of economic production

- Increase in economic growth in line with IMF (staff-monitored programme) projections — between 3.8 to 8 per cent in 2007

Strengthen Government's management of natural resources

- Forestry legislation enacted
- Environmental Protection Agency staffed and deployed in all counties
- Sanctions on diamonds lifted

Infrastructure and basic services**Rehabilitation of the transport network**

- Main strategic routes repaired and maintained (interim poverty reduction strategy target)^b
- Emergency work at Monrovia Freeport completed

Rehabilitation and expansion of health services

- Rehabilitation of health facilities in each county (interim poverty reduction strategy)
- Increase in health workers employed and deployed in each county (interim poverty reduction strategy)
- Construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in each county (interim poverty reduction strategy)

<i>Benchmark</i>	<i>Indicators of progress</i>
Rehabilitation and expansion of education services	• Rehabilitation of public schools across country (interim poverty reduction strategy) • Increased school enrolment, particularly of girls, across the country (interim poverty reduction strategy)

^a GEMAP will terminate after 36 months (September 2008) unless the Completion Point under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative has not been reached

^b The specific indicator will be based on the goals identified in the Government's interim poverty reduction strategy.

Annex II

**United Nations Mission in Liberia: military and police
strength as at 1 September 2006**

<i>Component</i>	<i>Military</i>				<i>Police</i>
	<i>Military observers</i>	<i>Staff officers</i>	<i>Troops</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Ceremonial police</i>
Argentina					
Bangladesh	17	11	3 188	3 216	28
Benin	4	1		5	
Bolivia	3	1		4	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	17				9
Brazil		1		1	
Bulgaria	2			2	
China	5	7	558	570	23
Croatia		3		3	
Czech Republic	3			3	5
Denmark	2			2	
Ecuador	3	1		4	
El Salvador	3			3	2
Ethiopia	17	8	2 536	2 561	
Egypt	10			10	
Fiji					30
Finland		2		2	
France		1		1	
Gambia	4			4	32
Germany			13	13	5
Ghana	11	7	846	867	41
Indonesia	3			3	
Ireland		3	352	355	
Jamaica					8
Jordan	7	8	115	130	138
Kenya	3	4		7	27
Korea	1	1		2	
Kyrgyzstan	4			4	3
Malawi		2		2	18
Malaysia	10	0		10	
Mali	4	1		5	
Mongolia		2	248	250	
Montenegro	2			2	1
Namibia	3	4	609	616	6
Nepal	3	2	40	45	256

<i>Component</i> Country	<i>Military</i>			<i>Police</i>	
	<i>Military observers</i>	<i>Staff officer</i>	<i>Troops</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Civilian police</i>
Niger	3			3	
Nigeria	18	13	1 951	1 982	136
Norway					10
Pakistan	16	11	2 738	2 765	31
Paraguay	3	1		4	
Peru	3	2		5	
Philippines	3	5	165	173	34
Poland	2			2	3
Portugal					
Republic of Moldova	3	1		4	
Romania	3			3	
Russian Federation	6			6	13
Rwanda					15
Samoa					16
Senegal	3	3	600	606	
Serbia	4			4	5
South Africa					
Sri Lanka					11
Sweden		3	230	233	11
Togo		1		1	
Turkey					33
Uganda					21
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland		3		3	
Ukraine	3	1	298	302	13
Uruguay					
United States of America	6	6		12	10
Yemen					4
Zambia	3			3	27
Zimbabwe					31
Total	220	120	14 487	14 827	1 056